

# OUTLOOK

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## THE ADVENTIST EDUCATION ISSUE

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**“To remain silent sends a loud message that I am apathetic about George Floyd’s murder, about the abuse of power, about the racism.” —p. 23**





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## ADVENTIST EDUCATION SHINES DURING PANDEMIC

In this issue of OUTLOOK magazine you can read many stories of how Adventist students, parents, teachers, principals and support staff have all worked together to continue the high standard of learning expected from Seventh-day Adventist education in the Mid-America Union.

Each setting was a little different. Yet from preschool through college, from small rural schools to large urban classrooms, the spirit of “something better” has thrived despite the isolation, social distancing, loss of jobs, illness and even, sadly, loss of lives.

Although we do not know for sure what August will bring for each of our schools, we pray that all our students and teachers will be safe, protected and filled with hope for the future as they continue to increase in wisdom and knowledge, and grow in favor with God and with their communities.



BRENDA DICKERSON  
editor



## ON THE COVER

Lyndsey Elsey graduated in May from Midland Adventist Academy in Shawnee, Kansas. Like many of the schools you will read about in this issue, MAA helped their graduates celebrate despite the pandemic.

Photo by Timothy Floyd

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# Amidst Transformation, Adventist Education Offers “Something Better”

**M**erriam-Webster’s dictionary defines transformation as “an act, process, or instance of transforming or being transformed (to change in composition or structure; to change in character or condition).”

When I googled transformation I found a definition that seems even more appropriate in today’s world: “a thorough or dramatic change in form or appearance.”

2020 has certainly been a year of transformation. When I began thinking about this editorial, the focus was going to be on how our schools provide an environment and opportunities for the love of Christ to transform an individual’s character. That “when Christ abides in the heart,

the whole nature is transformed. Christ’s Spirit, His love, softens the heart, subdues the soul, and raises the thoughts and desires toward God and heaven” (*Steps to Christ* p. 73).

Our schools exist to lead our young people to Christ. We have seen not only students, but parents and teachers be transformed through Adventist education.

However, in March, my thoughts started to change focus. We saw a transformation unlike anything we have

ever seen, and yet our education system did not lose focus on our main principles during this time.

About the time of Spring Break, when the students, teachers, and parents were looking forward to a time of relaxation and rejuvenation in preparation for the busyness of the final weeks of school, COVID-19 became a stark reality in the Midwest. Governors closed schools in their states. So instead of resting, our school boards, teachers and conferences set

about to transform school.

Decisions had to be made quickly: *Do we just close? Do we move to online learning? What do we do for the students who do not have internet access? How do we teach online?* All these questions and more had to be answered and plans had to be made.

## Adapting to the needs

The North American Division Office of Education stepped up and helped with onboarding schools, teachers and churches to use Zoom under their negotiated pricing structure. They created a website of resources that teachers could access for teaching during this pandemic. The website was updated regularly. Webinars were presented on general tips for teaching online, how to teach the Encounter Bible curriculum remotely, and mental health. We are grateful for their efforts.

Conferences also had to assist teachers in preparing to teach online. Many held



online trainings where they talked the teachers through how to conduct school virtually. Decisions on grading had to be made. The news was filled with stories about how many schools, colleges and universities were giving students the option to choose a pass-fail method, or use the third quarter grade as the final grade.

As a union, we decided to keep the status quo instead of making major grading adjustments. We did encourage our teachers to use professional judgment in making adjustments for individual students.

After a one-week Spring Break extension, our schools opened via virtual education. Those who could join online did. Home packets were created for students who did not have internet access. As we listened, we heard incredible stories of learning taking place. Students were excited to see their friends and teachers. We are so glad to see all the ways God blessed during these uncertain times.

## What have we learned?

**1. We have amazing teachers in the Mid-America Union.** Many of them faced steep learning curves and spent innumerable hours to meet the challenge of online learning. Their commitment to Adventist education was seen as they readied for online learning, interacted with their students and stayed true to

the principles of Adventist education.

**2. Our parents are supportive.** Here are just a couple of comments parents have shared:

**“I want to say that you and the school are doing such an AMAZING job with the remote learning. Your desire to reach out to families for feedback and then actually implement that feedback is truly wonderful ... And with my oldest child attending a different school, I can tell you that your actions are above and beyond as compared to what other schools are doing.”**

**“Our family has been blessed by the teachers who have gone above and beyond to help our children successfully finish the year.”**

**3. Our students are the reason for Adventist education.** Our teachers remained focused on their students. One teacher told me of the challenges with a young student who would just wander away from the computer when they were doing one-on-one work together and of the efforts to re-engage that student and help him succeed. Throughout this experience, the goal was to continue to provide “something better” for our learners.

## 4. Teaching during a pandemic is stressful!

Our teachers transformed learning—they went the second and third mile. They are tired, and yet they began preparing for next year the week after school ended.

Some have pondered whether Adventist education is worth the cost if that education is happening at home. As I’ve watched, it is clear to me that our schools provided something better (not perfect, certainly not ideal, but better) for our learners. Our schools have continued to provide opportunities, learning experiences and an environment where learners are encouraged to keep “the eye not on mere outward, superficial attainments, but on Jesus the model. A transformation takes place in mind, in spirit, in character” (*Counsels on Education* p. 149). In addition, a number of high school graduates in the Mid-America Union have received partial or full scholarships to attend college or university in the fall.

## Preparing for the future

Even with the unforeseen transformation that took place this year, I believe that this quote from the book *Education* (p. 297) remains true today:

*“Something better” is the watchword of education, the law of all true living. Whatever Christ asks of*

*us to renounce, He offers in its stead something better... Lead them (our youth) to behold the One “altogether lovely.” When once the gaze is fixed upon Him, the life finds its center. The enthusiasm, the generous devotion, the passionate ardor of the youth find here their true object. Duty becomes a delight and sacrifice a pleasure. To honor Christ, to become like Him, to work for Him is the life’s highest ambition and its greatest joy.*

We are all looking forward to next year. Our hopes and plans are for those in-person interactions with our students. However, we know that whatever form school takes next year, we are ready with “something better.” **0**



### LOUANN HOWARD

is education director for the Mid-America Union.



# Caring Heart



2019-20

## Each school year,

senior academics in the North American Division select a junior or senior student with a strong citizenship record, a personal commitment to witnessing and service, and an overall positive influence on their campus to receive a \$500 scholarship, a plaque and an engraved Bible.

**Sierra**  
Schlenker

DAKOTA  
ADVENTIST ACADEMY

**W**e are pleased to present this year's Caring Heart Award to Sierra, who is a general advocate for the well-being of others. A four-year senior at DAA, Sierra has organized prayer ministries, Bible study groups and other worship activities for our school body. She has also served as an officer in a number of school clubs and been an active member of the Bismarck Chamber of Commerce for the past two years. Sierra has been one of our top academic performers at DAA, and was also selected this spring to receive North Dakota's Best in Class Award.

**Ella**  
Foster

COLLEGE VIEW  
ACADEMY

**T**he faculty and staff at College View Academy have chosen Ella to receive the Caring Heart Award because we feel she exemplifies the true meaning of Christian love. She has a passion for serving and is the first to think about the needs of others. She has been a Student Association officer and has taken great initiative to involve everyone and include them in the school programs. Ella wants nothing more than to help others. Her goal is to study social work in college—with the hope of changing the lives of those around her.

**Shee k'paw**  
Paw

MAPLEWOOD  
ACADEMY

**F**rom her start as a freshman, Shee k'paw has impressed us with her kindness for others. In her quiet way, she shows her care for others through notes, thoughtful gifts and acts of service. Shee k'paw has a strong sense of duty and responsibility in every task set before her, consistently being the first to step up to help and the last to go home. In campus ministries and mission trips, Shee k'paw has inspired us with her ability to minister to those in need. Not wanting the spotlight, Shee k'paw works in the background, yet her small acts of kindness make big, meaningful impacts on those around her.

# Awards



**Victoria**  
Shelton

**Doh**  
Htoo

**Brooke**  
Henry

**Beverly**  
Onsoe

**MIDLAND**  
ADVENTIST ACADEMY

**V**ictoria is known as the girl with the smile. She's always cheerful and passionate about her work, and part of her passion for volunteering comes from her many years being a Pathfinder. Her smile instantly connects her with people at the New Hope Food Pantry, Chapel Oaks' Vacation Bible School, AdventHealth Early Learning Center, and other volunteer locations where she has spent over 400 hours. This year she was able to fulfill a dream of mission service by being part of a mission trip to Honduras. God has a special plan for Victoria's life and we wish her the best as she continues following His path.

**SUNNYDALE**  
ADVENTIST ACADEMY

**D**oh, a senior from Des Moines, Iowa, genuinely cares for the welfare of his fellow students and staff. He has a passion for prayer—he prays for his classmates and wants them to learn how to pray too. He looks for opportunities to share joy and encouragement with others and is planning his life around missions and helping people. His goofy, outgoing personality brightens the day of all those around him.

**MILE HIGH**  
ADVENTIST ACADEMY

**B**rooke is a natural spiritual leader. She cares deeply about her friends and her school community, and she seeks to bring life and joy to those around her. Spend time with Brooke and you will experience her kind nature, love for Jesus and desire to serve. Mile High Adventist Academy is blessed to have her as part of our family.

**CAMPION**  
ACADEMY

**B**everly has a sweet and tender heart. She touches those around her in a quiet way with her humor, listening ear and kind demeanor. Beverly was able to utilize these nurturing skills in a distinctive way as a resident assistant in the girls residence hall. Thank you for blessing those around you, Beverly.



**Adventist Education**  
A JOURNEY TO EXCELLENCE

# Transformation

By Michelle Velbis

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The definition of transformation is “a thorough or dramatic change in form or appearance.” This perfectly describes the transition from my overconfident and comfortable life as a business owner to my teaching career.





# A

As a 12-year business owner and homeschool mom, life was going along comfortably. Then a divorce and an economic crash came out of nowhere. I felt like a rowboat in the middle of a hurricane—out of control with no paddle.

Suddenly, I was a single mom with four children, no business, and no foreseeable job to put food on the table. Jobs were extremely hard to find, and I was grasping at straws. As a last resort, I started applying for teaching jobs all over the country. I had a bachelor's degree in English, and as a little girl had always told people I wanted to be a teacher when I grew up.

At first, I was picky and only sought out teaching positions in parts of the country I liked or at schools that looked successful. As I grew

more and more panicked, I started applying for any job that came up on the Adventist education website.

## Something special

One day, I got a call from the school board chair in Montrose, Colorado. I had no idea where this was, and after looking at Montrose online, I was more than terrified. It was a one-room school in a tiny town where I did not know anyone, and it was so far away from home that I knew I wouldn't see my family for a long time.

After the interview process, where I was 100 percent sure I would not get the job, I received a phone call instead asking when I would be moving to Colorado. My family thought I was insane, taking a job across the country, starting a new career, being a single mom, and not having any friend or family support to fall back on.

I felt a quickening in my spirit and knew God had something special planned if I was willing to be obedient. Against all logic, I made the move and began a career in teaching. Seeds had been planted as a little girl, but I

thought dreams were just dreams. God has a way of making our desires come true, but His timing is completely different, and His plans have a way of coming to fruition in unforeseeable ways.

I came to know my personal Savior and the Adventist Church as a teenager, but I had not had a chance to attend our church schools. The school in Colorado was the first Adventist school I would be "attending."

## More than enough

God showed me that although the storm was violent, He was with my children and me every step of the way, and His provisions were more than generous and timely. I couldn't wait to share my new revelations with my students and encourage them to lean into and learn more about our amazing Father, Creator and Savior.

My own children were given opportunities to serve their church and community in new and memorable ways, to pray and watch prayers be answered in their classroom, to be a part of educational and social events where they

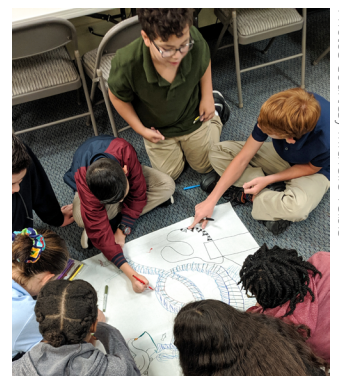
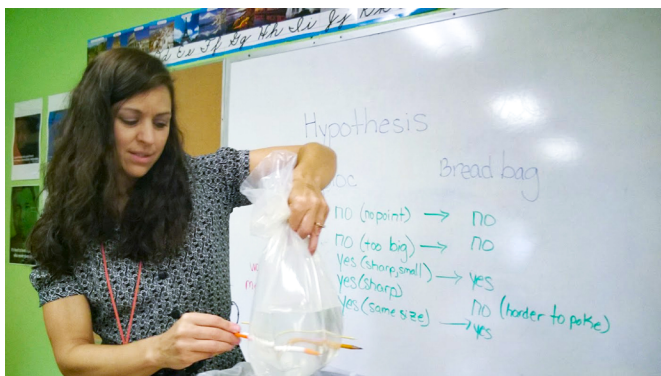
were stretched and encouraged, and to witness how a family of believers could band together to support and mentor them with their time, talents and resources.

As a teacher I took on my new role as a huge responsibility and honor, and I looked for creative methods of teaching the body, mind and soul—coaching my students to be successful and full of grit for the journey that lay beyond them with the knowledge that their Savior was their biggest cheerleader.

## Priceless gifts

Adventist education has been one of the biggest blessings in my life and the lives of my children. The investments have been worth the eternal and priceless gifts that come with it.

My family and I are all better people because of the daily blessings of praising, questioning and serving that happens inside our Adventist schools. I know that my children, and the ones I serve, will know their heavenly Father more intimately and will rejoice on that day when He comes again in the clouds. **0**



Photos Courtesy/Michelle Velbis

Michelle Velbis is the principal at Springs Adventist Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado. She is married to her best friend and has six amazing children and one adorable grandbaby. She loves reading, hiking and serving her community.

# Peace, Love and Respect

## One family's journey with Adventist education

Don and Lisa Waldschmidt are devoted parents of six children and dedicated servants of Jesus Christ. While not Adventists, they have prayerfully, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, elected over the past 10 years to send five of their six children to Hays Maranatha Christian School, the Seventh-day Adventist school in Hays, Kansas. Every day they drive 30 miles one way to get their children to school. Here is their story, in Lisa's words.

In August of 2009, the afternoon before three of our six kids were to start public school, I was extremely distraught. I just couldn't send them another year.

They had been introduced to public education the year prior. Initially, the kids were homeschooled. During the summer of 2009, they pleaded with me to "please go back to homeschooling." Their plea broke my heart because homeschooling has always been my desire. However, due to circumstances, I was not going to be able to homeschool.

I had heard about Hays Maranatha Christian School and its teacher, Mrs. Spears. And when I phoned Mrs. Spears that afternoon, she said, "Let's meet."

In the evening, my husband and I went to Hays Maranatha Christian School. The moment we drove up and experienced so much peace engulfing the one-room schoolhouse, we knew it was the place for our family. This was confirmed when we met Mrs. Spears.

During the past 10 years we've had the honor and privilege of four of our six children graduating from Hays Maranatha Christian School. We've had the profound pleasure of witnessing the hand of God on the school, the children, the staff, the supporters and the families. As God has been acknowledged, He has been faithful and just to answer every time.

Regrettably, we have not always been able to fulfill the financial requests and obligations of Hays Maranatha Christian School. But we are very grateful to the supporters who have kept the school operating. **0**

### Editor's Note:

With Rita Spears' retirement this summer and declining enrollment, the constituency has voted to temporarily suspend operations.

They hope to have enough students to re-open the school in a few years.



## What Maranatha Christian School has meant to me

### Vashti Waldschmidt

2014 graduate

What I enjoyed most about attending Maranatha was the respect each pupil had for the multi-level student population. We were honest and listened to each other. You could be yourself and didn't have to act differently to be accepted and included by your peers. Mrs. Spears taught us how to live out our faith by applying it to everyday life skills.

### Jada Waldschmidt

2015 graduate

There are so many concepts that get indoctrinated in public schools that oppose the Bible. However, our curriculum was taught to us through a biblical filter. Since Bible was taught every day at Maranatha, my faith continues to be made stronger daily. Everyone is taught the same qualities: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness and self-control—which results in everyone having a mutual camaraderie and respect for one another.

### Asher Waldschmidt

2016 graduate

I appreciated the fact that with Maranatha being a smaller classroom setting, Mrs. Spears was able to focus on individual students and their needs. When there is an over-abundance of students, they are subject to "fall through the cracks."

### Radiah Waldschmidt

2019 graduate

I loved getting to attend our "Little House on the Prairie" one-room school. My favorite part was getting to be with my siblings while attending school. I also learned how to hold my pencil correctly and write cursive.



School is her  
*“Second Family”*

## 12-year senior shares appreciation for Mile High Academy

**A**manda Sasmita, who graduated in May from Mile High Academy in Highlands Ranch, Colorado, says, “I love Mile High because of the community and all the connections I have made. It feels like my second family. I love it because I can express my faith freely without having to worry about any judgment.”

Amanda attended Mile High Academy from kindergarten through 12th grade, even through a time of family trauma when she wasn’t sure she could continue to be enrolled due to lack of financial resources. However, an anonymous donor stepped up and contributed toward her tuition fees.

Amanda’s mom, Noor Yuniati, who received a Christian education in Indonesia, states, “I feel safe sending my children to Mile High Academy—it’s a safe environment.” She also feels deep gratitude for the generosity of the donor who helped Amanda.

During her senior year, Amanda was president of the Student Association, took college classes, and was able

to participate in extracurricular activities. Amanda wants to go to college and pursue a nursing career.

“There are not enough words to express how thankful I am for the opportunities I was able to have,” Amanda adds. “If you have the means of helping out a kid whose family is struggling to receive an Adventist education, then just do it. I don’t know what else to say.”

Amanda Sasmita and her mom, Noor Yuniati, are deeply grateful for all the opportunities Amanda enjoyed at Mile High Academy.

Learn more about Amanda Sasmita’s story by watching the following video:  
[outlookmag.org/second-family](https://outlookmag.org/second-family)



Photos Courtesy Mile High Academy

## Central States Conference S.H.I.F.T.

S.H.I.F.T. stands for “Seeing Him in Frustrating Times,” and that’s precisely what we’re encouraging our Central States youth to do during this pandemic. “We wanted to give the young people a platform to express themselves about how they’re feeling and what they’re going through,” explained **Pastor Karsten Rogers** of Emmanuel Church in St. Joseph, Missouri.

During the program, young people join us live and

share their feelings about their disappointment with graduation, what it’s like being in the home with their families, and other relevant topics. Many people are exhausted. We are praying for the parents as well. This online ministry has also been blessed to have dynamic speakers such as **Pastor Ndubisi Nwade**, **Pastor Kyle Crawford** and **Chaplain Kory Douglas**.

One of the most powerful programs so far was during a graduation recognition

for the Central States Youth. There was a discussion with three male graduating seniors, **De’Leon Whitcomb**, **Chris Walls** and **Michael Henry**, whose hurt and frustration was palpable. In addition to not having a traditional graduation, they also had their college plans jeopardized because they didn’t know what would happen next.

Chris shared that he was looking forward to a scholarship for track, but since his track season ended prematurely, he was unsure about the future. Hearing those personal experiences gripped the audience and brought awareness to what our young people are going through.

“We’re excited for how God is blessing S.H.I.F.T., and we believe He’s going to do even greater things as we continue forward,” said Rogers.

Brittany Winkfield is communications director for the Central States Conference.



S.H.I.F.T. takes place every other Sabbath at 4 pm CST on the Central States Conference YouTube page.

[bit.ly/CSCYouTubeChannel](https://bit.ly/CSCYouTubeChannel)

S.H.I.F.T. offers a platform for youth to discuss their emotions and vent their frustrations about recent struggles. Helpful speakers also join to uplift and offer encouragement.

Courtesy/Central States Conference



Courtesy Cryston Josiah/Central States Conference

While we endeavor to keep the **unity** of the Spirit in the bonds of **peace**, we will not with pen or voice cease to

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## PROTEST

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against bigotry.

Ellen G. White  
Manuscript 11, page 229.2



Courtesy Cryston Josiah/Central States Conference



RJ Sengost/Denver Post



Photos (this row) Courtesy Cryston Josiah/CSC



Read Central States Conference's statement on George Floyd's death at [bit.ly/CSCGeorgeFloyd](https://bit.ly/CSCGeorgeFloyd).

# Dakota Adventist Academy Remains Open During Coronavirus

Spring Break usually conjures up memories of one last break before heading back to school to dig in for the final assault on the finish line. But this year things took an entirely new twist when one by one states issued orders to shut down schools and move to providing education via a stay-at-home model.

At Dakota Adventist Academy, however, things evolved differently than in most places in the country. When North Dakota's **Governor Doug Burgum** made the order to close schools, he specifically exempted Dakota Adventist Academy. Since the school is located in the countryside a few miles from Bismarck, North Dakota, and because its students all live under one roof, Burgum felt they could work with the social distancing model families adopt.

Thus, DAA's students were invited to return to campus and resume their studies. At the same time, DAA also offered online classes to those who chose to continue studies from home. More than half of the students returned, each with his or her own bedroom and bathroom.

The students ate meals and sat in classes 6 feet apart for the first 72 hours and through to the weekend. For the next seven weeks they worked, played, studied, worshiped and exercised together as usual. The campus remained closed, and only specific staff made grocery or other needed runs.

"Little did we know as we were putting this together, aside from one private school in Tesopaco, Mexico, we were—as nearly as we could tell—the only Adventist high school with live, in-person classes operating in North

America," said principal **Anthony Oucharek**. "In this world of insecurity, where things can change overnight, it was good to have a place that provided some form of stability—some measure of living life to the fullest rather than hunkering down to wait out the storm," he added.

The teachers had to work a lot harder to provide classes and support for both online learners and the students in their care on campus. Partly due to the diligence of the teachers and some of the parents who kept their children at home, and partly due to the resilience of the students, they accomplished as much as before the pandemic.

Those students who worked on mechanics doubled down on their projects. Some students signed up for extra courses. Others worked on portfolios or found new creative outlets. The only

program to see a hit was the robotics program, which was supposed to end in a meet in Orlando in early May. Due to the coronavirus, the meet was canceled.

"There has been much talk about whether or not schools will open again in the fall. Even if other schools remain closed in the fall, DAA has proven it can meet the initiative to provide for real-time education, and we do plan to open our doors for live classes beginning Aug. 17," said Oucharek. "We are taking applications, should any new students be looking for the stability we are able to provide during these tenuous times."

Anthony Oucharek, Dakota Adventist Academy principal with Jacquie Biloff, Dakota Conference communication director



Clif Freese

## Poor Bear Adams Returns to Dakotas

Despite everything happening in the world around us, I am reminded of God's power and plans to make things new. By His blessings, our family is very excited to join Dakota Adventist Academy this coming school year.

It was my senior year in high school at Holbrook Indian School in Arizona when I realized I wanted to be an English teacher. I always loved reading, but until that year I didn't realize how much more the humanities had to offer. Debate, research, critical thinking and various writing techniques offered so many more outlets.

I had to work hard to make up ground as I transitioned to college courses at Union

College in Lincoln, Nebraska. Creating positive relationships with my professors and practicing resiliency in my personal life paved the way for success in getting my bachelor's degree in Language Arts Education.

My husband, **Zak**, and I both graduated from Union College and moved to Holbrook Indian School in Arizona, where I was the girl's dean and freshman English teacher. As our time and experience grew, so did our roles on campus. Zak became the full-time art teacher and I became the vice principal and teacher of a college preparatory course and an advanced reading course.

In my teaching experience, I have taught American

literature, drama, public speaking, core English classes and a next level preparatory class. The preparatory class included life skills, testing preparation, college and scholarship applications and an exploration of vocational and other certification opportunities.

My family and I look forward to this new adventure in the Midwest. I was born and raised on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota and am an Oglala Lakota Sioux. We have an 11-year-old boy, 7-year-old boy, 3-year-old girl, and two 1-year-old boys.

Zak and I are nervous about returning to the cold winters, but are excited to be close to family and friends. Our

Photos Courtesy Dakota Conference



children, however, are excited to play in the snow this winter and make new friends.

Jovannah Poor Bear Adams begins teaching this fall at Dakota Adventist Academy.

## DAA Holds Creative Challenge Day

When students remain at school instead of going home for their scheduled home leaves, the school's leaders have to be creative.

While taking time off from the rigors of classes, students are able to get in touch with their creative and competitive sides. The TV show *Chopped* features contestants who have to come up with a dish including specific ingredients. The DAA staff decided to host its own version with the DAA Chopped Dessert Challenge.

What can be made from puffed pastry, whole

champagne mangos, chili powder and Hershey's bars? Judges **Pastor Brooke Melendez**, **Jared Gibson** and **Ryan Peterson** sampled the creations and scored each student on presentation, creativity and taste.

Third place went to **Wesley Kayser** with his s'more pastry; second place went to **Jaelyn Pickett** with her mango and pineapple lattice pie; and first place went to **Savannah Ulery** with her chocolate gnash puff with mango and chili puree.

With the arrival of warmer spring days, the staff and

students took lunch to the pond to roast hotdogs over a fire. The students took advantage of the topography for their own challenge: Who can jump highest up the bank of the hill? The picnic was a relaxing, fresh air-filled adventure. Some students took the canoe for a trip around the pond as well. The afternoon

finale was a Wii tournament.

The pleasant day ended with a vespers service back at the pond. It was a rejuvenating and refreshing way to spend the day meant for home leave.

Tracy Peterson is the recruiter for Dakota Adventist Academy.



## Hillcrest Elementary School Rises to Challenge of Educating During a Pandemic

As the threat of COVID-19 spread across the globe this spring, schools everywhere had to make difficult decisions and implement rapid changes. Adventist schools across the Iowa-Missouri Conference met these challenges head on.

In the St. Louis area, Hillcrest Seventh-day Adventist School identified three goals for the remainder of the 2019-20 school year.

The first and most important goal was to help students continue to grow spiritually. We determined that it was imperative our three classes continue to meet every day via Zoom to open God's Word together and pray with and for one another. We also met on Zoom once a week for school-wide worship.

The second goal was to maintain community. We accomplished this through daily virtual classes where students were given the opportunity to interact with each other

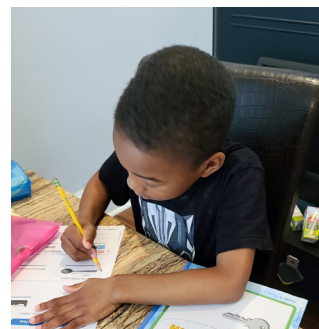
during their lessons.

Our third goal was to provide our students with a sense of normalcy. In a world that's been "turned upside down," as one student put it, we wanted them to be able to count on a consistent routine to finish out the school year.

Regardless of where they were studying, we wanted them to have assurance that they could rely on their teachers for the same support and positive affirmations they were used to receiving in a physical classroom. We maintained our high standards of education and were pleased when our students rose to the challenge.

We are so proud to be a part of Adventist education in the Iowa-Missouri Conference and to know and teach that no matter what is happening in the world, God is in control and He has us all in His loving care.

Melissa Morris is principal and grades 7-9 teacher at Hillcrest School in Olivette, Missouri.



Photos Courtesy/ Melissa Morris

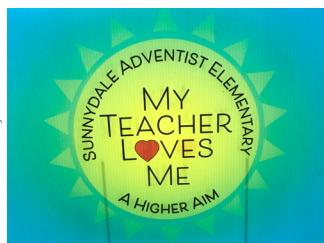
(top left) An eighth grader is surprised with gifts at home on graduation day.

(top right) A student completes a class assignment from home.

(bottom) Students dress up for a school activity during Spirit Week called "Heroes Day."

## Sunnydale Adventist Elementary Posts Yard Signs at Students' Homes

Courtesy Kristen Mathis



After schools in Missouri closed due to the coronavirus pandemic, Sunnydale Adventist Elementary found

a creative way to remind their students that they are individually loved and cared for.

With help from **Jacob Roney**, a graphic designer and son of SAE teacher **Pam Roney**, they made yard signs and placed them at each of their students' homes. The signs, scattered around the community, serve as a visual reminder to students, their

families and neighbors that connections can be maintained despite physical distance.

The staff at SAE pray for their students daily and hope the signs brought some comfort during a confusing and challenging time.

Kirsten Mathis is principal at Sunnydale Adventist Elementary in Centralia, Missouri.



Learn more about Sunnydale Adventist Elementary or any of the conference's other schools at [imsda.org/schools](https://imsda.org/schools).



## Adventist Community Services Meets Critical Needs Amid COVID-19 Crisis

Courtesy/Jody Dickhaut



Disposable gloves and face masks are delivered to a Mid-America Regional Council warehouse. Pictured (right to left): Missouri ACS director Jody Dickhaut, MARC emergency planner Sean Hury and volunteers for Americorp and another area agency.

### Food relief

As part of a \$1.5 million initiative of the North American Division, the Iowa-Missouri Conference was recently awarded a \$25,000 grant for local food relief efforts in the wake of food shortages and the devastating economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

The funds were quickly distributed to food pantries throughout the conference, including Around Town Mobile Food Pantry in Des Moines, Iowa; the St. Louis Adventist Community Services Center; and other Adventist food pantries in places like Belton, Gallatin and Fredericktown, Missouri. These ministries provide food to thousands of food-insecure families each month.

“We praise God in Christ for the funds made available to assist this ministry, especially in such difficult and uncertain times,” said **Kris Hicks**, pastor of the Fredericktown Church.

The sentiment is shared by other volunteers and church leaders, many of whom say that their local ministries may not have been able to continue without these funds.

### Personal protective equipment

As the coronavirus spread throughout the Kansas City area, the Mid-America Regional Council for the bistate Kansas City region reached out to the Missouri ACS team for help in securing additional personal protective equipment (PPE).

Thanks to a collaborative effort between FEMA; ACS; AdventHealth; the North American Division; the Mid-America Union; the Iowa-Missouri, Kansas-Nebraska, and Central States conferences; and local churches in the Kansas City area, supplies have been secured that will be used in Kansas City and other areas of the conference that have need for additional PPE. So far (as of June 1):

- \$10,000 in masks have been purchased
- 3,600 masks have been distributed in Kansas City
- 58,000 pairs of gloves have been donated, 12,000 of which are being set aside for the Mid-America Regional Council
- 125,000 cloth masks are being distributed throughout the conference

### Regarding the 2020-21 School Year

The content for this issue of OUTLOOK, the last before the 2020-21 school year begins, was submitted at the end of May, as the 2019-20 school year was ending.

At the time this is being written, we are optimistic that our schools will be able to resume in-person classes this fall. But because we don't know what the situation will be then, we encourage you to check with your local school regarding their plans.

### Get Weekly Updates

We send out weekly updates by email, so look for “imConnected” in your inbox each Thursday. If you're not already signed up, please visit [imsda.org/newsletter](https://imsda.org/newsletter). Regular updates are also being posted at [imsda.org](https://imsda.org), as well as our Facebook and Twitter pages.

### Coronavirus Resources

Visit [imsda.org/covid-19](https://imsda.org/covid-19) for coronavirus information and helpful resources such as:

- Sabbath streaming services
- Tips for ways to connect with fellow members
- Returning tithes and offerings online
- Our Monday evening prayer line
- Updates on event cancellations
- Encouraging video messages, blogs and more

Because the need for these vital supplies remains so high, this relief effort will continue throughout the summer.

Rachel Ashworth is a member of Peace Point Chapel in Sikeston, Missouri, and a blogger for OUTLOOK magazine.



Support this and other ACS initiatives in Iowa and Missouri at [imsda.org/acsd](https://imsda.org/acsd).

From Now On



“Beginning on May 30, we have been presenting a program every night on Facebook called: ‘From Now On,’” says **Pastor Roberto Correa** (Hispanic Ministries coordinator for the Kansas-Nebraska Conference and the Mid-America Union Conference).

“Every Hispanic pastor is covering an important topic regarding the end of times,” explains Correa. “**Pastor Sandro Sandoval** and his children are hosting the program. The kids bring a lot of good moments. The average viewership is about 1,500 every night. We have been blessed to be connecting with our members and studying very important topics during this unprecedented time.”



Learn more at [bit.ly/KS-NE\\_hispanicministries](https://bit.ly/KS-NE_hispanicministries)

## Emmanuel Hispanic Church Member Sews Masks for Those Fighting Coronavirus

Out of work due to the coronavirus pandemic, **Mari Areolla Padilla**, a member of the Emanuel Hispanic Church in Kansas City, Kansas, wanted to find a way to serve others. Padilla is the owner of a cleaning business, and due to the quarantine found herself at home with time on her hands.

After watching videos of the nurses and doctors on the frontlines saving lives, she was inspired to contribute her “tiny share” to help them. Protective masks were in short supply for medical professionals. Perhaps she could find a way to provide masks to those in need.

Padilla called a good friend who knew how to sew and shared her idea. “You know how to sew and I’ll provide the materials,” she explained. Her friend happily agreed to

help. After diligently watching tutorials on how to properly make sterilized masks, they began production.

Good causes always inspire others, and soon other friends who were out of work volunteered their services to make masks with them. Padilla’s family was also inspired to help her fulfill her dream of helping workers on the frontlines.

Materials for the masks were difficult to find due to store closures, but more than 350 masks were made and shipped to New York through the Greater New York Conference. The group of volunteers are also keeping up production of their masks to help local nurses in the Kansas City area. With every mask, they are inserting a Bible text to encourage the wearer.

“We are so blessed. Even though we are not working on our daily jobs and not making money, we are working for the best boss: Jesus Christ. God is faithfully providing for our needs and we want to give back by blessing others,” shared Padilla.

Be inspired and use your God-given gifts to bless someone in your community. In this time of crisis, more than ever, we can be God’s hands in action.

Roberto Correa serves as Hispanic Ministries coordinator for the Kansas-Nebraska Conference and the Mid-America Union Conference.



Photos Courtesy: Emmanuel Hispanic Church

# Bridging the Gap of Social Distancing

## College View Academy students continue to learn

In this time of education via Zoom, packets of assignments, Google Classroom, Google Hangouts, FaceTime, text messages and emails, the teachers at College View Academy have stepped up to the challenge. Many teachers and schools in the state of Nebraska chose not to present new curriculum to the students during the fourth quarter of this past school year, but this was not the case at College View Academy.

Our teachers presented new information and continued preparing students to finish the school year in a strong way. From preschool to high school, our teachers dedicate themselves to educating students and preparing them to be successful in college and beyond.

Guest speakers joined classes in both elementary

and high school online classrooms. These speakers ranged from local government officials to an epidemiologist from Johns Hopkins to musicians to friends of CVA who showed their baby ducks. We were also blessed with a week of prayer speaker, **Russell Palmer**, who brought a powerful week with music, messages and prayer.

The high school campus ministries team connected every day at 6 pm by Instagram Live, allowing guests and students to present worship thoughts. Students shared

their faith, laughs and love for life. The campus ministries team was also instrumental in planning and coordinating a Mid-America Union-wide vespers, where nearly 100 students joined to worship together in a Zoom vespers. Students from each school were involved in the program.

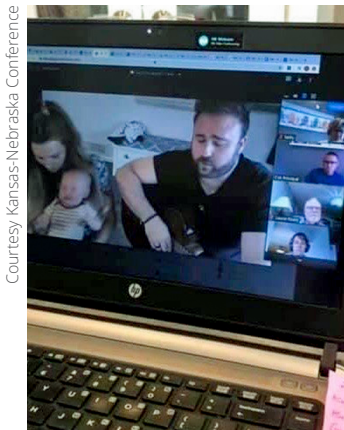
Signing yearbooks is a time-honored tradition, but nearly impossible to do while social distancing. But our yearbook sponsor, **Angela Pierce**, found an app called Padlet, which allows students to write messages

to one another just like they were signing each other's yearbooks. Those messages were printed and inserted into the yearbooks.

In a time when we can't meet in person, our students and teachers have knocked it out of the park with creative ideas to stay connected and help us feel like a school family.

Missy Sorter is director of marketing and admissions at College View Academy in Lincoln, Nebraska.

During a time of social distancing and disrupted classes, College View Academy teachers found ways to keep their students involved and learning, including inviting guest speakers (left) and connecting via various media, coordinating a union-wide vespers and providing student-presented worship thoughts.



Courtesy Kansas-Nebraska Conference



Jessi Dadds

# Minnesota Teachers and Students Adjust to a New Learning Format

As teachers and students across Minnesota prepared for Spring Break, we anticipated that things would probably be different when the break ended. When the governor of Minnesota announced that schools would close in an effort to protect students and slow the spread of COVID-19, we began to implement plans for online learning.

There was a significant amount of concern and apprehension as preparations were made. For most of our teachers, this is a new format and process of teaching, and there were certainly

a number of unknowns. However, our teachers rose to the occasion and provided a quality online learning experience for our students.

This does not mean just worksheets and busy work to keep students occupied at home. Classes were faithfully taught and student knowledge was increased. Music classes were presented, and even art classes continued.

We have received positive feedback from parents, especially as they heard from friends and family about what other schools and school systems did during the pandemic. Through this

difficult time, our education team has been able to continue to make the case for the value of Adventist education and has displayed the quality that exists in our schools.

One added blessing to this crisis is that all of us have been forced out of our comfort zones. We have had to explore new ways of reaching our students and presenting materials. New technology has been implemented.

These are things that help us grow as educators and will continue to impact how learning occurs when we return to our classrooms.

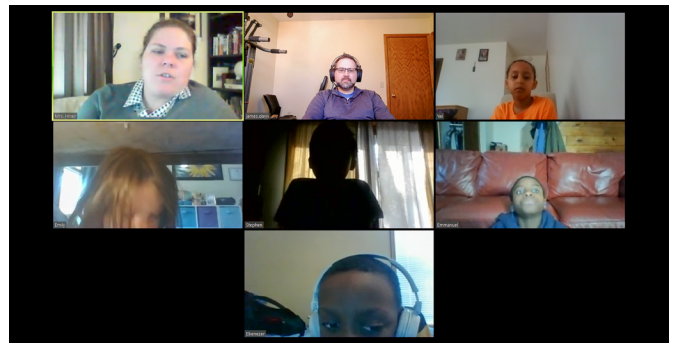
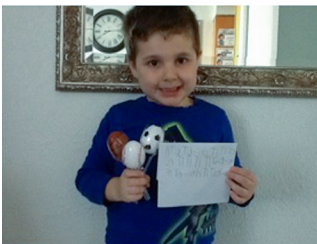
What the future holds

is uncertain. We are making plans in the event the situation continues into next school year.

Whatever the future may hold, though, we can have confidence that we have first-rate, flexible Christian teachers working with our young people.

James Davis Jr. is education superintendent for the Minnesota Conference.

Photos: James Davis Jr.



## Maplewood Academy Brings Flexibility into Education

On Wednesday, March 11, Maplewood teachers and staff were in a much different place than by the end of the school year. They were only one day away from Spring Break, but they held an assembly to let students know they may not be able to return to school as scheduled. By the end of the school year, teachers and students alike were still adjusting to social distancing and distance learning.

Science teacher **Zach Pratt** was pleasantly surprised that the class connections were made without too many technical difficulties. He did have a few humorous moments, though.

“I had students answer their phone in class and forget to mute their

microphone,” he said. “My wife texted a student with a topic and he responded right away. She showed me later and it was during my class. One student was in class trying hard to keep track of younger siblings,” Pratt said.

**Jeff McCormick**, a senior village student, gained an extra 30-40 minutes each day by not having to drive to school. “In a way, distance learning improved my focus,” McCormick said. “I enjoy being at home and having a longer break between classes. So, I did a quick run in place at my desk or a few pushups.”

**Mallory Heinbaugh** used to gather nearly every night in the cafeteria in a large group with her fellow sophomores. Now, she has to find other ways to stay in touch

with her friends.

“We usually do group chats on Instagram or Snapchat,” she said. “We also text each other and sometimes we do a group call. When I do see people in person, I get excited. I do social distancing and stay back 6 feet, but it is exciting to see them.”

Heinbaugh said her distance classes are less interactive, but she enjoys them more. “I have more time to focus while in class. I mostly miss seeing my friends and being able to get help in person from the teachers.”

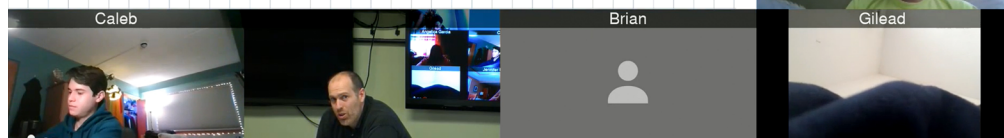
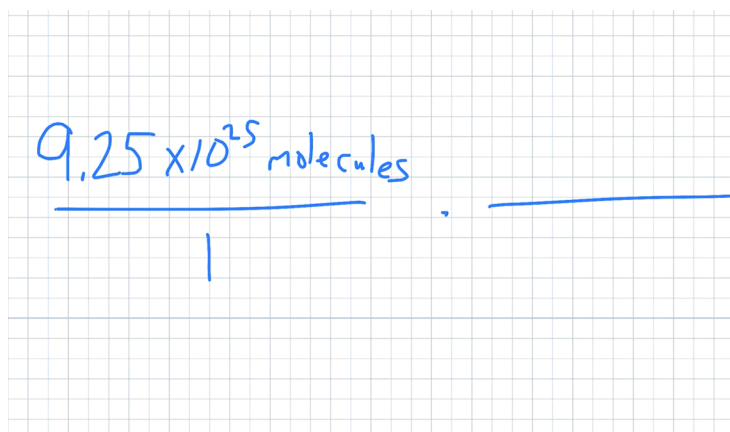
Senior **Jay Kim** faced the biggest challenge of any Maplewood student—getting home. Kim is an international student from South Korea. He began his journey home on Sunday, April 12,

and on April 14 he emailed his teachers to let them know he had finally arrived.

It was a 20-hour trip that became 10 hours longer due to a required COVID-19 test at the Seoul, South Korea, airport. Thankfully, he tested negative and was allowed to proceed.

Maplewood students and teachers want to thank **Nathan Struckman**, assistant boys dean and IT director, as well as **David Daum**, Minnesota Conference IT director, for helping transition the school to online learning quickly and smoothly.

John Bedell is outgoing principal of Maplewood Academy.



Left: Zach Pratt teaches chemistry

Below: Linda Vigil teaches via distance learning



Photos: Courtesy/John Bedell

## Second Annual Ride to Fight Human Trafficking



Courtesy Rocky Mountain Conference

**K**aren Fettig, president of Beneath Our Wings, a nonprofit organization dedicated to eradicating human trafficking in Wyoming and educating the public to recognize and report such crimes, is conducting her second annual trail ride by mule in the fight against human trafficking. A member of the Worland Church, Fettig has a passion for helping people,

especially victims of abuse and trafficking. Last year, Fettig rode from the Wyoming-Montana border to the Wyoming-Colorado border. This year, she is riding from the Wyoming-South Dakota border through North Dakota all the way to the Canada border. A recent fundraiser held on Facebook to help cover the costs of this journey

raised \$1,020. Fettig says, "Thank you, everyone, for your generosity and support of Beneath Our Wings. The plan is to traverse the country toward Canada as time, weather and circumstances allow. Human trafficking is growing, and Beneath Our Wings Ministry helps educate people by raising awareness of this crime against humanity, teaching the public what to look for, and evaluating how we need to protect our children."

Samantha Nelson is co-founder and CEO of The Hope of Survivors, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting victims of clergy sexual abuse and educating clergy and congregations.



**Support Beneath Our Wings Ministry**

Donate at [beneathourwings.com/donate](http://beneathourwings.com/donate)

Contact Karen Fettig at [wyorose689@gmail.com](mailto:wyorose689@gmail.com)

Visit [facebook.com/BOWMWY](https://www.facebook.com/BOWMWY)

## Grand Junction Couple Initiates Curbside Visits to Fellow Church Members

**I**n the spirit of the sunny Western Slope, two Grand Junction Church members, **Don and Dollie Bell**, are set to visit all church members during the coronavirus pandemic's social isolation.

In the month of March, Dollie turned to Don and asked him what he thought of visiting all the church members, as she missed seeing them. He said yes and that he would even be her driver.

With address directory in hand, they set out to cover all the zip codes. As of this writing, they had visited a total of 60 members from the curb, with approximately 60 more to go.

Each visit starts with a phone call to announce their arrival. They hold a placard that says, "We miss and love you!" and give a wave, exchanging smiles and greetings. Sometimes they have a chat from the curb with the parishioners or hold a conversation by phone. Once their visit even included a "socially distant" walk.

"It has been so much fun to see everybody, and we have considered it a blessing," Dollie said.

Remarking about the visit he received, **David Klemm** commented that "Don and Dollie have a gift for uplifting those around them, and it was

great to see them." As greeters in the church, they enjoyed learning what was going on in people's lives. And now, driving to their homes has continued those efforts. Dollie is happy people have been so receptive and welcoming. They even met one young lady who hasn't been to church for a while, and she was so excited for the visit that she

now wants to bring her mom to the newly built church. Don and Dollie's spirit of community is a living example of what Solomon wrote: "A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for a time of adversity" (Prov. 17:17).

Karla Klemm is a member of the Grand Junction Church in Colorado. She facilitates church community events.



Karla Klemm

# America Is Hurting. Where Is the Church?

America is hurting. America is burning. Can America survive the violence by the men and women who are supposed to protect us? Can America survive those who are destroying businesses in the name of peace and equality?

These are questions being asked in the wake of the unrest happening across America.

I'm appalled by the video of the police officer murdering George Floyd, but what can I do?

Racism is just one piece of what is happening in America. Behind it came destruction. It may not affect me, my family or my church family, but doing nothing doesn't seem to be the best response. We can't be silent any longer.

"As Adventist Christians, we cannot sit back quietly at a time like this! When satanic forces create injustice, we must speak up in defense of our brothers and sisters who have no voice," said **Ed Barnett**, RMC president. "[The violence we see] doesn't give us license to do evil. It gives us license to love like Jesus loved! And believe me, that will make a difference."

Racism is not new. It was around long before Christ walked this earth. When Christ came, He not only came to save us from our sins, but to be an example of how to live. He spent much of his time with people who, for centuries, had been spit upon, beaten down and yes, even targeted by government and ecclesiastical officials.

"Adventism has long been

a movement that has grasped prophecy as necessary and relevant," said **Jennifer Ogden**, pastor of Boulder Church. "In this time of upheaval, led by an oppressed group, it is necessary that Adventists acknowledge that in aligning our voices and actions with freeing the oppressed, we continue the prophetic understanding of Adventism."

## What did Christ do?

Did Christ march? Did He release a statement on behalf of the temple condemning certain actions? Was He overwhelmed with anger, destroying shops in Jerusalem because of the evil and violence He witnessed?

"To remain silent sends a loud message that I am apathetic about George Floyd's murder, about the abuse of power, about the racism that leads to actions that demoralize, dehumanize, and minimize, or that my heart isn't aching for his family and so many of my friends and family who have endured abuse, hatred, and other atrocities like this for way...too... long. Why? Because they don't fit the narrow mold determined by some as acceptable citizens," **Diane Thurber** commented on Facebook.

"It is not

Christlike to remain silent when any segment of our society is being subjected to injustice! We must clearly and loudly speak up to condemn and actively reject racism and any other form of oppressive evil within our society," said **Daniel Birai**, pastor of Fort Collins Church.\*

I am white, so I don't know the fear my brothers and sisters experience when they leave their home. (*Is this the day I'm going to have a knee held on my neck for nine minutes?*)

I'm single, so I don't know the fear parents experience regarding their children. (*Is this the last morning I'll be able to hug my child before school?*)

I'm an American citizen, so I don't know the fear my immigrant friends experience. (*Is this the day ICE will break down my door?*)

For some, the fear is unremitting. We live in an evil and fear-filled world. So I ask, *Where is the church?* Have we ignored Jesus' words, "Love thy neighbor?"

## Is there any hope?

Many people may be losing hope that real change can happen, but hope isn't gone. When we love our neighbor, hope returns. It lives.

"My voice matters. Let's be angry, speak up, love

and hug everyone and anyone," commented **Rajmund Dabrowski**, communication director for RMC.

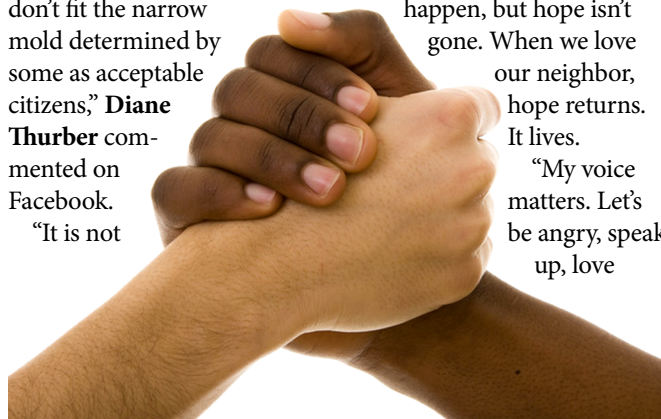
"I admit and recognize that equality and justice have never truly been realized in our nation," stated **Christopher Morris**, associate pastor of Littleton Church. "I'm going to be intentional and active toward changing that reality."

**Jessyka Dooley**, RMC assistant youth director, commented, "I love seeing my generation stand up to racism. I believe our church's response to this blatant and disgusting racism will cause teens and young adults to either lean into or away from the church once again. So, I beseech the church that I love ... Step up! Speak out! Say the names of those murdered at the hands of police brutality. Let your actions proclaim that Black Lives Matter. Stop making excuses! Do not be lukewarm on the issue of racism or I, and many of my brothers and sisters, will spit you out."

Will we take a step forward and repent for staying quiet too long? Christ has called us to action. He's been knocking for a long time, and it is time we answer the door instead of ignoring His invitation to be present where we are—no matter how difficult.

.....  
Jon Roberts, communication/media assistant for the Rocky Mountain Conference, with Rajmund Dabrowski, communication director for the Rocky Mountain Conference

\*See Daniel Birai's full statement at [rmcsda.org/america-is-hurting-where-is-the-church](http://rmcsda.org/america-is-hurting-where-is-the-church)



# In a Pandemic, Clinical Patients Help Heal Student Nurses

It's not learning as usual in the age of COVID-19, but Union College nursing students in **Elysia Ockenga's** mental health class discovered that sometimes a change in plans can bring unexpected blessings—and benefit the student provider just as much as the patient.

The class focuses on mental health, including the importance of communication between healthcare providers and patients. Usually students are paired with patients at Lincoln's Regional Center to help them hone their therapeutic communication skills, but COVID-19 put an end to in-person patient visits.

"We needed to find a way for students to establish a relationship with patients," Ockenga explained. She reached out to neighboring College View Church and Union Manor, Union College's HUD-funded retirement apartments, asking for volunteers who were willing to meet by phone with a nursing student once a week for four weeks.

Junior nursing major **Isaiah Delarmente** was paired with a local resident who was immunosuppressed

and sheltering in place. Over the four-week clinical, they built a friendship. Instead of the required 15 to 30-minute phone calls, the two often spoke for an hour.

"It was different than being in a hospital because over the phone you can't see nonverbal communication," Delarmente said. "It taught me that it's fundamental to get out of my comfort zone and build relationships with my patients."

Delarmente said his last phone call with his patient proved that relationship. "As we were wrapping up, she wished me luck and prayed for me. That was really meaningful."

This innovative clinical proved to Delarmente that, even during a pandemic, Union's nursing program is preparing him for his future career. "They've given me new experiences. I've learned that not everything is going to go my way, but sometimes you just have to do things by yourself, like study and put in the work."

Senior nursing major **Amanda Harland** was nervous about the mental

health class from the start.

"It's different from other nursing classes," she said.

"It's not a class where we give medications and do a head-to-toe assessment." She was scared she wouldn't get the communication right, but she said Ockenga showed her she could do it.

Then COVID-19 changed the direction of clinicals. "I thought getting to know someone over the phone would be awkward," Harland said. Again, she was pleasantly surprised. "My patient talked a lot about leaning on Christ. It was empowering for me, and I learned how I could look at life through her perspective," she said. "It's one of the best things that's happened in my nursing education."

Like most Union students, Harland moved back home when live classes were canceled. Her family was also personally affected by COVID-19, making it hard for her to focus. "Online learning was a challenge, but our teachers were there for us."

Harland said the patient she was connected with also helped. "She'd lost her husband earlier this year, and we talked a lot about coping and how God has a plan for everyone. I

found comfort in that."

Harland hopes future nursing students get the chance to experience this project, even if COVID-19 isn't a factor. "Reaching out to community members and telling someone 'I'm here to listen' is something that can change lives and perspectives," she said.

During their clinical phone calls, students practiced professional and therapeutic communication. But Ockenga said she didn't anticipate the larger learning the students would get. "These individuals have experienced life and were able to share with our students that we all have difficult times and ways to cope," she said. "They found a connection—the older individuals appreciated someone to listen to their stories and spend time with. The students found a relationship in which an older person cares about them. It speaks to what our college is about—community and connection—and these students exemplify that. I'm so proud of them."

Story by Lauren Bongard Schwarz, a Union graduate and freelance writer in Bozeman, Montana.

Photos Courtesy Union College



**Left:** When COVID-19 struck, Isaiah Delarmente met weekly over the phone with a local immunosuppressed resident for his mental health nursing class clinical hours.

**Right:** For nursing student Amanda Harland (right), the individual she worked with during her mental health nursing clinical actually helped her learn to cope with the disruption caused by COVID-19.



# Nursing Grad Battles Some of the World's Scariest Diseases

**S**tephen Scheffler calls himself a cautionary tale. Others think of him as an inspiration.

In the last few years, Scheffler, a graduate of the Union College nursing program, has run into the disaster zone as often as he can. In 2015 he flew to Sierra Leone to care for Ebola patients, and in 2020 he moved to New York City to help fight the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Learning to run toward challenges

Life hasn't been easy for Scheffler. After being raised by a single mother with very few resources, he was desperate to make a successful path for himself. He first arrived at Union College considering a degree in graphic design, then spent years in indecision, struggling to find the right career fit.

Between changing majors, taking time off to help family, pausing to earn money for tuition, and struggling academically, Scheffler took nine

years to ultimately graduate with a nursing degree.

Through working with the Teaching Learning Center, a doctor diagnosed Scheffler with depression and anxiety. He felt relieved to better understand why he had trouble with focus, but continued to struggle. He even failed a semester of nursing courses.

But the teachers and staff in Union's nursing program rallied to help Scheffler succeed. At one point, he couldn't afford his medications and the nursing professors even helped pay for his prescriptions.

"I do feel like if it had been any other program, anywhere else, I wouldn't have made it," said Scheffler. "It scares me to think about that." After Scheffler's long-awaited graduation in 2011, he passed his boards on the first try.

## The Ebola crisis

Scheffler worked in a variety of clinical settings his first years on the job. But in 2014, a crisis caught his eye.

He opened his browser and typed, "I'm a nurse. How can I help with Ebola?"

That query sent him to the USAID page, where he filled out applications and was referred to Partners in Health, a nonprofit organization. After a few days of intense training, Scheffler flew to Sierra Leone for a

nine-week stint on the front lines of the Ebola epidemic.

"It was tough," Scheffler reflected. "There was a lot of death. It was kind of scary."

But he calls the experience amazing. "I was able to help people and try to save some lives. I worked with some of the most courageous, compassionate people I've ever worked with in my life. It is something I can really be proud of."

Scheffler believes he was approved for service in Sierra Leone because of his experience treating patients in Nicaragua as part of his studies. "They were only taking people with international experience," he said. "I learned a lot about cultural sensitivity through Union's Global Health Nursing class."

## The COVID-19 pandemic

Recently, Scheffler once again volunteered to serve in the danger zone. He left his stable job as a charge nurse in Colorado to take a temporary assignment at a hospital in New York City overrun with COVID-19 cases.

"There is a lot of fear and frustration, and people not knowing what is going on," Scheffler said of the outbreak. "We didn't have a lot of personal protective equipment. We still don't. It's very scary because you don't know who has COVID-19."

His experience with coronavirus-positive patients has spanned the whole range. "Some recover, some seem perfectly fine," Scheffler said. "Others died. And there are other patients who lived, but will never be the same."

Serving in the midst of a crisis and watching other people doubt the veracity of the illness has been discouraging for Scheffler. He has seen the danger posed by COVID-19. "People dying alone in the hallway is real," Scheffler attests. "Just not everybody is seeing it."

## A duty to respond

Some people might call him crazy for running into major crisis situations, but Scheffler doesn't have to think twice. "If I'm able, I need to go. Some situations require a response if you have the capacity to respond."

And he thanks Union for helping him build on his experience to develop an attitude of service. "When I was at Union they said, 'If you answer the call and go, you'll be given what it takes to handle the situation.'"

Carrie Purkeypille is a Union graduate and freelance writer based in Sacramento, California.



Courtesy Stephen Scheffler

After everything he went through to get his college degree, Stephen Scheffler now voluntarily goes to fight some of the world's scariest diseases—such as Ebola and COVID-19.



Learn more about Union College's nursing program at [ucollege.edu/nursing](http://ucollege.edu/nursing).

## AdventHealth Shawnee Mission Choir Promotes Healing Through Music

**P**atricia Saggia-Thomas, RN, BSN, knows the power that music can have on healing. A nurse in the Progressive Care Unit at AdventHealth Shawnee Mission, she remembers a patient who she connected with through singing.

“I knew he loved music because he had a hymnal on his bedside table,” she says. “I asked him if we could sing together. He was dying, but every time I started to sing, he would light up and sing along.”

To bring music to more patients, Saggia-Thomas decided to start a choir for the team members at the hospital. She reached out to the Spiritual Wellness department at AdventHealth Shawnee Mission, who were enthusiastic about the idea.

“I’ve been singing all of my life, helping out with the choir at our church,” she says.

“It’s something that gives us a feeling of togetherness and improves our well-being. I wanted to find out how we could make singing part of our healing ministry.”

Team members from various departments at the hospital started signing up for the choir late last year. When looking for a director, Saggia-Thomas wanted to find someone with professional experience. She reached out to **Anita Cyrrier**, former director for the Johnson County Chorus, who agreed to volunteer to direct the choir.

In December 2019, the AdventHealth Shawnee Mission choir started singing Christmas carols in the hospital hallways for patients as well as at some patients’ bedsides.

“The patients loved it,” says Saggia-Thomas. “You can really tell how music

comforts them and has a way of reaching into their hearts. It also fosters our human connection that the person behind those scrubs cares about their whole being.”

In addition to singing on the patient floors, the choir regularly sings for hospital chapel services as well as other events at the hospital. They were scheduled to sing at Camp Bluebird for cancer survivors, infant loss services, Honor Walks to pay respect to organ donors and other community events.

In recent months, the choir had to postpone singing at the hospital and at events because of COVID-19 restrictions. To help ease anxieties while maintaining social distancing, they made a video of a song, “Namaste,” that was shared on the AdventHealth Shawnee Mission Facebook page. Each of the choir members recorded their portion of the song at home. They then sent the videos to Saggia-Thomas so she and her husband could compile them and produce the video.

The song “Namaste” is a respectful greeting of Indian origin that helps serve as a reminder to recognize and appreciate the good in others.

“We may be different, but we are the same when God places His love and kindness within us,” says

Saggia-Thomas. “He shines forth in the care we provide and how we treat one another.”

She says the music has not only been therapeutic for patients, but team members as well. It helps them feel connected with patients as well as each other.

“I think they’ve found that singing is a good outlet,” says Saggia-Thomas. “Whether it’s before or after a shift, it helps them relax. It’s also a good way for us to connect and learn more about our fellow team members throughout the hospital.”

Ann Muder is a freelance writer and editor for AdventHealth Shawnee Mission.



For more information about AdventHealth Shawnee Mission services and events, visit [AdventHealthKC.com](http://AdventHealthKC.com).

The AdventHealth Shawnee Mission choir sings Christmas carols on the oncology unit in 2019.



Courtesy AdventHealth Shawnee Mission

# A Spiritual Power Pill: Faith, Love and Family

“God had another plan,” says **Nancy Clark**, a COVID-19 survivor who spent 14 days at Centura Health’s Avista Adventist Hospital, six of those on a ventilator. More than a few times, **Thom**—her husband of 30 years—assumed she wasn’t going to make it.

Nancy had several underlying medical conditions. And yet, two weeks after she was rushed to the Louisville, Colorado, emergency room, Nancy left the Centura facility smiling, crying and surrounded by the very nurses and doctors who cared for her. “These people saved my life!” she exclaimed.

Days earlier, inside the hospital’s intensive care unit, registered nurse and house

supervisor **Jane Harris** was able to administer a spiritual power pill of sorts. With the help of the ICU team of caregivers, Harris facilitated a way for Nancy’s husband Thom to communicate with his wife through an exterior window and cell phones. “He just kept saying ‘I love you. I love you. Stay strong,’” she recalled.

Being on a ventilator and in and out of consciousness, Thom wasn’t sure Nancy was hearing him—but to everyone’s surprise, she opened her eyes. Harris said, “Thom got very excited, nudging my side saying, ‘Did you see that? She’s going to be okay.’” Thom went on to encourage his wife, saying, “You’re going to make it. Stay strong.

I need you.”

Harris added, “I knew facilitating a way to communicate would help Thom, but I didn’t realize how it would also impact our patient.” Back inside the ICU, nurses mentioned to Harris that whatever she did had worked. Nancy was the most active they’d seen her in days.

At Centura Health, we know the care that comes from our minds and hands is only one part of whole person care. There’s another kind that comes from within—from our inherent, soulful desire to treat others with kindness and compassion.

Early in the pandemic, all 17 of Centura’s hospitals across Colorado and western Kansas were provided iPads equipped with virtual meeting technology so families could remain united with loved ones in the hospital when it’s not possible to interact with them physically. Data collected on isolation’s impact on healing shows

that patients struggling with a sickness need to hear a familiar voice to help them on their journey back to whole health. And this new capability supports Centura’s philosophy of caring for the mind, body and spirit of its patients.

With a new outlook on life, Nancy is back on her feet at home in Colorado. She said, “I feel very fortunate.”

Harris, the nursing supervisor who helped get her there, added that the experience solidified her belief that we are all on this planet to look out for each other and uplift one another—and that “to provide the best care” requires all of us and serves all of us. “I’m awestruck by the impact of connection for our patients—the power of faith, love and family is amazing,” she added.

Submitted by Wendy Forbes, director of media relations and public relations for AdventHealth Rocky Mountain/Centura.

Left: Nancy Clark is surrounded by staff on her day of departure from Avista Adventist Hospital after 14 days, six of those on a ventilator.  
Right: Jane Harris, RN and house supervisor, observes her patient Nancy.



Photos Courtesy AdventHealth Rocky Mountain/Centura

# FAREWELL

**Andriantsibohaina, Jean Robert**, d. May 9, 2019. Member of Great Bend (KS) Church.

**Bennett, Ruth**, b. Oct. 18, 1949. d. Oct. 17, 2019. Member of Lincoln Northside (NE) Church.

**Blue, Donald Ben**, b. Aug. 28, 1943 in Blair, NE. d. Nov. 9, 2019 in Lincoln, NE. Member of College View (NE) Church. Preceded in death by 1 brother. Survivors include wife Christy; sons Daniel and Derrick; daughter Dianna; step-daughter Carrie Gaul; 1 brother; 4 grandchildren. Served in U.S. Army during Vietnam War.

**Enochs, Kenneth W.**, b. April 21, 1943. d. June 1, 2020 in Wichita, KS. Member of Wichita South (KS) Church. Preceded in death by 1 brother. Survivors include wife Linda; sons Jeffrey, Troy,

and Cory; 9 grandchildren; 7 great-grandchildren.

**Herbel, Norman Dean**, b. Sept. 17, 1941 in Great Bend, KS. d. April 4, 2020 in Abilene, KS. Member of Enterprise (KS) Church. Preceded in death by 3 brothers; 1 great-grandson. Survivors include wife Judith; daughter Rebecca Guebelle; step-daughter Beth Snyder; son Ronald; step-sons Timothy and Thomas Johnston; 1 sister; 7 grandchildren; 6 step-grandchildren; 2 great-grandsons.

**Lorenz, Beverly Jane**, b. Feb. 22, 1932 in Helper, UT. d. March 20, 2020 in Lincoln, NE. Preceded in death by husband Fredrick; 1 brother. Survivors include sons Bruce and Dean; 5 grandchildren.

**Lorenz, Fredrick Lyndon**, b. Sept. 22, 1931 in Cheyenne, WY. d. June 7, 2019 in Lin-

coln, NE. Preceded in death by 3 sisters. Survivors include wife Beverly; sons Bruce and Dean; 5 grandchildren.

**Malina, James**, b. Dec. 25, 1936. d. March 2, 2020. Member of College View (NE) Church.

**Mancillas, Donna**, b. May 16, 1942 in Richland Center, WI. d. April 28, 2020 in Marshalltown, IA. Member of Marshalltown Church. Preceded in death by 2 siblings; 8 grandchildren. Survivors include husband Ray; children Chris Macklin, Cathy Dunston, Caryn Jacobson, Michael King, J.R., Rebecca Westrich, Oliver, Jewel Hoffard, and Jennifer Knight; mother; 3 siblings; 27 grandchildren; 36 great-grandchildren.

**Parrott, Dennis LeRoy**, b. March 24, 1946 in Red Oak, IA. d. May 4, 2020 in

Thornton, CO. Member of the Brighton (CO) Church. Survivors include wife Barbara; daughter Katherine Clarke; son Dennis; and 2 grandchildren.

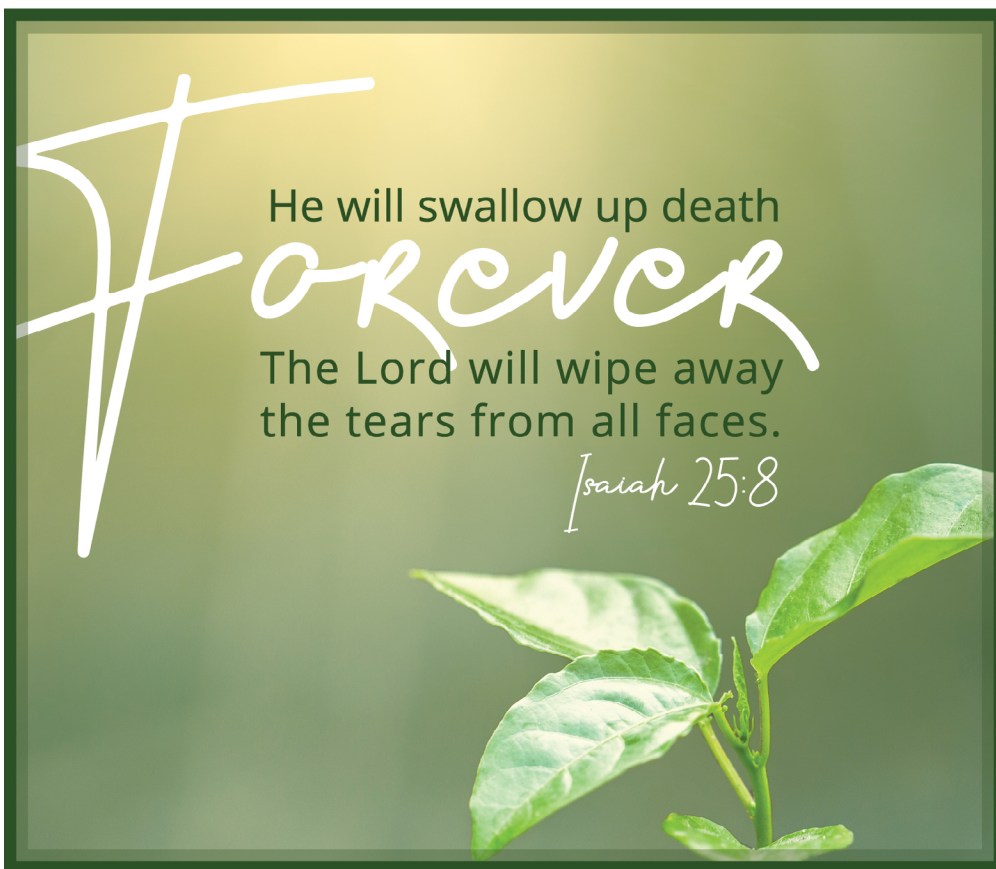
**Pennock, Wayne**, b. Feb. 25, 1934 near Benton, IA. d. March 31, 2020 in Des Moines, IA. Member of Des Moines Church. Survivors include wife Joanne; daughter Debra Worrell; sons David and Tim; 10 grandchildren; 7 great-grandchildren.

**Pitford, Robert L. Sr.**, b. Oct. 11, 1937 in Clark County, MO. d. June 24, 2019 in Keokuk, IA. Member of Kahoka (MO) Church. Preceded in death by 2 sisters. Survivors include wife Rose; daughter Tammy; son Robert Jr.; 4 siblings; 4 grandchildren; 7 great-grandchildren.

**Siewert, Pearl**, b. Sept. 4, 1922 in McLaughlin, SD. d. May 15, 2020 in Newcastle, WY. Member of Bowdle (SD) Church. Preceded in death by husband Aaron. Survivors include daughter Tami Franklin; son Steve; 3 grandchildren; 4 great-grandchildren.

**Stenerson, David**, b. Dec. 29, 1941 in Buffalo, SD. d. May 11, 2020 in Buffalo, SD. Member of Bowman (ND) Church. Preceded in death by wife Mary Britton; daughter Sabrina Haigler. Survivors include daughter Dulcey Honeycutt Salisbury; 5 brothers; 4 sisters; 1 grandchild; 1 great-grandchild.

**Stymiest, Loretta**, b. March 22, 1943. d. Feb. 4, 2020 in Hot Springs, SD. Member of Hot Springs Church. Preceded in death by husband Robert; sons George Kull and Sandy Kull. Survivors include son Grover Kull, Jr.; daughters Phyllis Grantham, Mary Mateo and Robyn Gyles; grandchildren; great-grandchildren.



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EMPLOYMENT

**Walla Walla University is hiring!** To see the list of available positions, go to [jobs.wallawalla.edu](http://jobs.wallawalla.edu).

EVENTS

**Indiana Academy Alumni Weekend Oct. 9-10, 2020.** Alumni weekend will be conducted at the academy located in Cicero, Indiana. There will be a golf tournament on Friday, Oct. 9. For reservations, contact Bill Summitt at [IAgolfclassic@gmail.com](mailto:IAgolfclassic@gmail.com) or call 317.437.8104. Sab-

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bath services Oct. 10 will be streamed via YouTube at Indiana Academy Alumni or on the alumni website at [iaalumni.org](http://iaalumni.org). For questions about weekend events contact Janet Schalk White at [janet.white@earthlink.net](mailto:janet.white@earthlink.net).

**Oak Park Academy Alumni Weekend Sept. 11 and 12.** Alumni, former faculty and staff are invited. The 2020 Honor Classes are: 1940, 1945, 1950, 1955, 1960, 1965, 1970, 1975, 1980-83. Location: Gates Hall, 825 15th St., Nevada, IA. Plan to attend. For more information: Allayne Petersen Martsching, 402.312.7368 or email: [allaynemartsching@gmail.com](mailto:allaynemartsching@gmail.com).

**Plainview Adventist Academy, Sheyenne River Academy, and Dakota Adventist Academy Alumni Weekend Oct. 2-3, 2020** at Dakota Adventist Academy, 15905 Sheyenne Circle, Bismarck,

ND. Honor Classes: '46, '51, '56, '61, '66, '71, '76, '81, '86, '91, '96, '01, '06, '11, '16. For information call 701.751.6177 x212 or visit [www.dakotaadventistacademy.org](http://www.dakotaadventistacademy.org).

## NOTICES

**Mission opportunity for individuals, families or Sabbath School groups:** Urgent request from Adventist Child India. There are 183 children who have lost their sponsors, and we have over 300 new applications for whom we need to find sponsors. \$35 per month provides tuition, lodging, food, books, clothing and medical for a child. For more information visit [www.adventistchildindia.org](http://www.adventistchildindia.org).

# ONLINE SUMMER BOOK SALE

CHECK [AdventistBookCenter.com](http://AdventistBookCenter.com) DAILY July 12-19 to catch all these one-day bonus deals!

For one week, you'll have the opportunity to watch short videos to learn all about the sale's featured books. Then, simply order your favorites at amazing discounts!

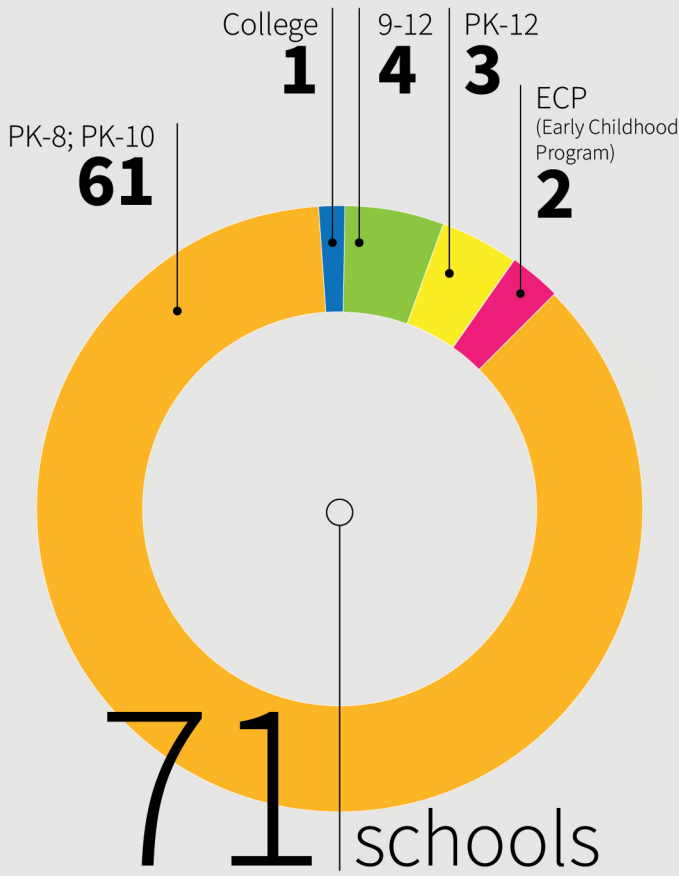


| SUNSET CALENDAR     | JULY 2020  |              |               |               |               |               |
|---------------------|--|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
|                     | <b>COLORADO</b>  | <b>JUL 3</b> | <b>JUL 10</b> | <b>JUL 17</b> | <b>JUL 24</b> | <b>JUL 31</b> |
|                     | Denver   | 8:31         | 8:29          | 8:25          | 8:20          | 8:13          |
|                     | Grand Junction   | 8:43         | 8:41          | 8:37          | 8:32          | 8:26          |
|                     | Pueblo   | 8:25         | 8:23          | 8:19          | 8:14          | 8:08          |
|                     | <b>IOWA</b>  |              |               |               |               |               |
|                     | Davenport  | 8:39         | 8:37          | 8:32          | 8:27          | 8:20          |
|                     | Des Moines   | 8:51         | 8:49          | 8:45          | 8:39          | 8:32          |
|                     | Sioux City   | 9:06         | 9:03          | 8:59          | 8:53          | 8:45          |
|                     | <b>KANSAS</b>  |              |               |               |               |               |
| Dodge City          | 9:05   | 9:03         | 9:00          | 8:55          | 8:49          |               |
| Goodland            | 8:17   | 8:14         | 8:11          | 8:05          | 7:59          |               |
| Topeka              | 8:52   | 8:49         | 8:46          | 8:41          | 8:34          |               |
| <b>MINNESOTA</b>    |  |              |               |               |               |               |
| Duluth              | 9:05   | 9:01         | 8:56          | 8:49          | 8:40          |               |
| International Falls | 9:18   | 9:14         | 9:08          | 9:01          | 8:51          |               |
| Minneapolis         | 9:02   | 8:59         | 8:54          | 8:48          | 8:40          |               |
| <b>MISSOURI</b>     |  |              |               |               |               |               |
| Columbia            | 8:38   | 8:36         | 8:32          | 8:27          | 8:20          |               |
| Kansas City         | 8:47   | 8:45         | 8:41          | 8:36          | 8:30          |               |
| St. Louis           | 8:28   | 8:26         | 8:23          | 8:18          | 8:11          |               |
| <b>NEBRASKA</b>     |  |              |               |               |               |               |
| Lincoln             | 9:01   | 8:59         | 8:55          | 8:49          | 8:42          |               |
| North Platte        | 9:19   | 9:16         | 9:12          | 9:06          | 8:59          |               |
| Scottsbluff         | 8:33   | 8:30         | 8:26          | 8:20          | 8:13          |               |
| <b>NORTH DAKOTA</b> |  |              |               |               |               |               |
| Bismarck            | 9:40   | 9:36         | 9:31          | 9:24          | 9:15          |               |
| Fargo               | 9:24   | 9:21         | 9:15          | 9:08          | 8:59          |               |
| Williston           | 9:57   | 9:53         | 9:47          | 9:40          | 9:31          |               |
| <b>SOUTH DAKOTA</b> |  |              |               |               |               |               |
| Pierre              | 9:28   | 9:25         | 9:21          | 9:14          | 9:06          |               |
| Rapid City          | 8:39   | 8:36         | 8:31          | 8:25          | 8:17          |               |
| Sioux Falls         | 9:11   | 9:08         | 9:03          | 8:57          | 8:49          |               |
| <b>WYOMING</b>      |  |              |               |               |               |               |
| Casper              | 8:47   | 8:44         | 8:39          | 8:33          | 8:26          |               |
| Cheyenne            | 8:35   | 8:32         | 8:28          | 8:23          | 8:16          |               |
| Sheridan            | 9:04   | 9:01         | 8:57          | 8:51          | 8:43          |               |
| <b>OUTLOOK</b>      | <a href="http://www.outlookmag.org">www.outlookmag.org</a> |              |               |               |               |               |

| SUNSET CALENDAR     | AUGUST 2020  |              |               |               |               |
|---------------------|--|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
|                     | <b>COLORADO</b>  | <b>AUG 7</b> | <b>AUG 14</b> | <b>AUG 21</b> | <b>AUG 28</b> |
|                     | Denver   | 8:05         | 7:56          | 7:46          | 7:36          |
|                     | Grand Junction   | 8:18         | 8:09          | 8:00          | 7:49          |
|                     | Pueblo   | 8:00         | 7:52          | 7:43          | 7:33          |
|                     | <b>IOWA</b>  |              |               |               |               |
|                     | Davenport  | 8:11         | 8:02          | 7:51          | 7:40          |
|                     | Des Moines   | 8:24         | 8:14          | 8:04          | 7:53          |
|                     | Sioux City   | 8:37         | 8:27          | 8:16          | 8:05          |
|                     | <b>KANSAS</b>  |              |               |               |               |
| Dodge City          | 8:41   | 8:33         | 8:24          | 8:14          |               |
| Goodland            | 7:51   | 7:42         | 7:33          | 7:22          |               |
| Topeka              | 8:26   | 8:18         | 8:08          | 7:58          |               |
| <b>MINNESOTA</b>    |  |              |               |               |               |
| Duluth              | 8:30   | 8:19         | 8:07          | 7:54          |               |
| International Falls | 8:40   | 8:28         | 8:16          | 8:02          |               |
| Minneapolis         | 8:30   | 8:20         | 8:08          | 7:56          |               |
| <b>MISSOURI</b>     |  |              |               |               |               |
| Columbia            | 8:13   | 8:04         | 7:55          | 7:44          |               |
| Kansas City         | 8:22   | 8:13         | 8:04          | 7:54          |               |
| St. Louis           | 8:04   | 7:55         | 7:46          | 7:35          |               |
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| Lincoln             | 8:34   | 8:25         | 8:15          | 8:04          |               |
| North Platte        | 8:51   | 8:42         | 8:32          | 8:21          |               |
| Scottsbluff         | 8:04   | 7:55         | 7:44          | 7:33          |               |
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| Fargo               | 8:49   | 8:38         | 8:26          | 8:13          |               |
| Williston           | 9:20   | 9:08         | 8:55          | 8:42          |               |
| <b>SOUTH DAKOTA</b> |  |              |               |               |               |
| Pierre              | 8:57   | 8:47         | 8:35          | 8:23          |               |
| Rapid City          | 8:08   | 7:57         | 7:46          | 7:34          |               |
| Sioux Falls         | 8:40   | 8:30         | 8:19          | 8:08          |               |
| <b>WYOMING</b>      |  |              |               |               |               |
| Casper              | 8:17   | 8:07         | 7:57          | 7:45          |               |
| Cheyenne            | 8:07   | 7:58         | 7:48          | 7:37          |               |
| Sheridan            | 8:34   | 8:24         | 8:13          | 8:01          |               |
| <b>OUTLOOK</b>      | <a href="http://www.outlookmag.org">www.outlookmag.org</a> |              |               |               |               |



# Mid-America Union



## PK-12 SCHOOLS BY CONFERENCE

- 2** Central States

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- 9** Dakota

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- 14** Iowa-Missouri

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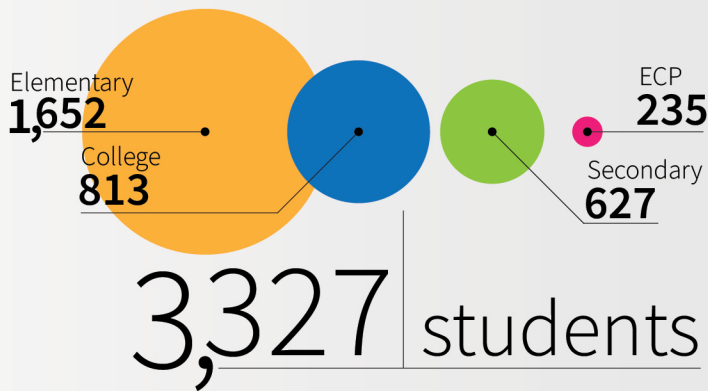
- 13** Kansas-Nebraska

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- 12** Minnesota

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- 18** Rocky Mountain



## Schools by SIZE

- 31** 1-Teacher Schools

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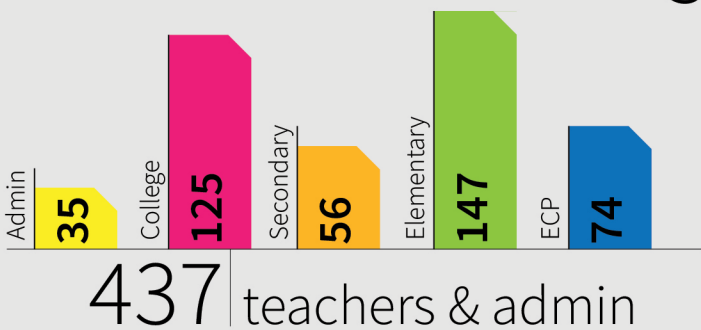
- 16** 2-Teacher Schools

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- 9** 3-Teacher Schools

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- 12** 4+ Teacher Schools





## When you face a spiritual battle, who's got your back?

Jordi Obregón (center in photo) remembers a spiritual battle he'd been fighting for weeks. And the struggle wasn't going well. "I felt like I was losing," he said.

Jordi tried to handle it alone, but he eventually realized he needed reinforcements. Since arriving at Union College as a freshman, he had connected with Jose Miguel Marin, a junior he trusted as a spiritual leader. One evening as they hung out with friends, Jordi opened up to Jose.

Afterwards, Jose encouraged him by saying, "I know exactly what you're going through. I've been there before. You're not alone in this fight."

Jordi found someone he could count on as a friend and prayer warrior. If that's the kind of relationship you value, Union might be the right fit for you.

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